

# Seattle Permits

— part of a multi-departmental City of Seattle series on getting a permit

## Right-of-Way Improvements Manual (ROWIM)

**Web Site** [www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual)

The Seattle Department of Transportation successfully launched the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual (ROWIM) web site in September 2005. The ROWIM is an on-line resource developed to help property owners, developers, architects, landscape architects, and engineers involved with the design, permitting and construction of improvements to Seattle's street rights-of-way.

The ROWIM summarizes the City of Seattle's Land Use Code requirements (Title 23 of the Seattle Municipal Code) for street and alley improvements and presents specific criteria for design and installation. In addition, the ROWIM also includes additional resources and guidelines for doing work in the street rights-of-way including information on project permitting, construction requirements and street design guidelines.

The ROWIM is a user friendly resource designed to provide quick access to specific information about doing work in the right-of-way. The ROWIM consists of six chapters.

*Chapter 1 Introduction* provides an overview of the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual purpose and need and defines the authority, roles and responsibilities of the various City departments that have oversight of the street rights-of-way. This chapter also includes information on the relationship between the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual and other regulations and guidelines, as well as a description of the revision process and update schedule.

*Chapter 2 Procedures, Permitting Process and Approvals for Street Right-of-Way Improvements* is designed to help navigate the process for preparing permits for street right-of-way improvements. These include resources to guide the applicant through the environmental review, design review or historic district review processes, as well as the steps needed to prepare a permit application. Permit forms and other helpful tools are also included and can be downloaded directly from this site. This chapter also describes the information which must be submitted to request a deviation from street improvement requirements. The information in this chapter constitutes the City of Seattle's official permitting process for work in the street rights-of-way.

*Chapter 3 Street Right-of-Way Improvement Requirements* summarizes the City of Seattle's Land Use Code requirements (Seattle Municipal Code Title 23) for street and alley improvements. It explains the importance of the various types of street and alley improvements, and explains how to make the best use of the Manual to determine the type and extent of improvements required by the Land Use Code. It describes the specific improvement requirements for different types of streets and alleys in different zones, based on the requirements in the Land Use Code. These requirements are summarized in a series of tables and drawings for easy reference. The information in this chapter constitutes a set of requirements that are officially adopted by a joint Director's Rule (#30-90/91-4) between the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) and Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT).

*Chapter 4 Design Criteria* provides technical information and design criteria for specific elements of the street rights-of-way, such as grading, pavement type and depth, street tree placement, and utility locations. Design criteria have been established so that streets and sidewalks used by the public and maintained with public funds will meet standards for operating efficiency, and will hold up to long-term use with minimum maintenance and repair. These requirements and criteria pertain to streets and alleys that are under the jurisdiction of the Seattle Department of Transportation. They also pertain to private streets and alleys that will serve development projects. A deviation request from the design criteria in this chapter may be requested from the City of Seattle for certain streets in unusual situations, or for certain development projects for which the requirements or design criteria would be unreasonable. The information in this chapter constitutes a set of requirements that are officially adopted by the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual joint DPD/SDOT Director's Rule # 30-90/91-4.

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City of Seattle  
Seattle Department of Transportation

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor Grace Crunican, Director

700 5th Avenue, Suite 3900  
P.O. Box 34996  
Seattle, WA 98124-4996  
(206) 684-ROAD (7623)

*Chapter 5 Construction and Maintenance* defines the information needed for working in the street rights-of-way including links to Seattle's Traffic Control Manual for In Street Work and the Pavement Opening and Restoration Rules (authorized by Ordinance # 118751).

*Chapter 6 Streetscape Design Guidelines* describes design guidelines that may be of interest to project applicants, but do not represent requirements. Many are neighborhood specific, such as Green Street, light rail station area plans and street design concept plans. Others define City programs that apply to street rights-of-way but are not required, such as traffic calming and natural drainage system guidelines.

We invite you to visit the ROWIM web site at: [www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/rowmanual)